HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Submitted to the Committee on Human Services

For HB 1403

Compiled on: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 10:25 PM

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Hearing Date: April 29, 2025 8:00 AM

Rachael Cayton Barden
Self
Austin, TX

Thank you for your service and this opportunity. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a former Child Protective Services Specialist. I have a graduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin and am a former Child Welfare Scholar at the School of Social Work. I regularly assess for child safety in homes as a part of my job and safe weapon storage is a part of this assessment. Many of the children in the child welfare system are at danger of self harm and easy access to a firearm is a huge risk to these children. Please allow the child welfare agencies in charge of keeping our Texas children safe to properly assess weapon risk in these home. They are trained to determine risk (to others, as well as themselves) and ensure that weapons, including knives, are kept safely, especially when kids are at risk of self-harm. These jobs are very challenging and protecting children in high risk environments is extremely stressful. Please do not make this important job more difficult, or impossible, to successfully perform. The stakes are life and death for these children.

Mary Recio
self retired
Autin, TX

Vote no. Definitely needed information to assess safety of a child.

Nikolaos Vekris
Self
Austin, TX

The list serves the purpose of the foster parent disclosing the weapons to ensure the provider has disclosed all weapons and helps with verification that all the weapons are verified stored properly. Foster children are the most vulnerable population in the state and ensuring that firearms are disclosed, secured, and verifiably affiliated with the home is important for oversight. A foster care provider could conceal their ownership of the firearm if an accident occurs if the oversight agency does not know what firearms are in the house.

Susan Kelly

Self; Retired Journalist

Austin, TX

I oppose HB 1403 because it limits child welfare agencies' ability to assess the safety of foster placements by restricting disclosure of weapon information. Gun violence is the number one cause of death among children and teens in Texas. CPS should be able to learn what weapons are in the household and recommend secure storage methods to ensure a safe household for all children.

Susan Hall

self; retired teacher

Austin, TX

I strongly oppose this bill as a parent in this state. One of the first things I ask another adult who has asked if my child can play with their child at their home is "do you have guns?". If the answer is yes, then I ask more..."is the gun stored securely?" "do your children know where the gun is located?", "Is the ammunition stored separately"...we already win all the awful records and stats for child gun deaths in America. Why would any elected representative want to make it unknown to social workers that guns and how they are are kept in a foster home placement. Homes where the persons are trusted to do the BEST for the children entrusted in their care? This seems to be malicious malpractice. We should be working to make sure foster homes are some of the safest homes any child can be in, not the opposite. I oppose this bill and strongly encourage all voting member so vote against the passing of this bill. Pay attention reps! We already have a crisis shortage of child protective service social workers. Passing legislation to criminalize them for doing a good job is insanity. Vote against this bill!

Ana Luisa Salas-Porras

SELF

Austin, TX

I strongly urge the committee to VOTE NO. In order to provide safe foster placements, child welfare agencies need every available safety check possible. To restrict the disclosure of weapon information in assessing a placement's safety will result in more safety issues for kids. Protect Texas kids, not gun owners. Vote No.

BILL KING

self - retired judge

Austin, TX

Gun violence is the number 1 cause of death for children and teens. Why would you make it harder to prevent this? Especially for children who the State of Texas has removed from their own homes for some misconduct, the State has the legal responsibility to place those children in safe environments. Vote No on this bill.

Kevin Chen

Self

Austin, TX

I am strongly opposed to this bill, because it would make it more difficult to assess the safety of foster homes by restricting disclosure of weapon information.

Nicholas Mollberg, Mr.

self, software sales

Austin, TX

As A 5th generation texan, I have used and owned firearms my entire life. Responsible firearms ownership is something we should always aspire to, and this bill will make it harder for those who care for vulnerable children to protect them. We do these children a disservice by placing them into homes where officials can't clearly assess the safety of those homes. I stand in firm opposition to this bill.

JAMES GALLAGHER
self
JONESTOWN, TX

Stop putting guns ahead of children. Reject this bill.